

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE MAUREEN HINDA, MP

DEPUTY MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

DURING THE SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

01-05 OCTOBER 2018

Madam Chairperson,

Mr. Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner for Refugees,

Your Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

Namibia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the Africa Group. We thank Mr Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner for Refugees for his insightful statement and Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, Executive Officer of the World Bank for her inspiring words.

Mr High Commissioner,

I wish to commend you and your capable team for your continued commitment and support to refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR throughout the world.

Namibia is fully aware of the ever challenging environment in which UNHCR staff operates in order to extend international protection to all persons of concern. It is a well-known fact that the refugee population is increasing drastically throughout the world, with large proportion in the developing countries, hence the need for a robust political will to resolve large-scale crises.

We are hopeful that 2019 will see many of these challenges resolved, through the end to conflicts and the implementation of durable solutions. In this regards, Namibia pledges continued cooperation with UNHCR and countries whose nationals are hosted in Namibia for durable solutions. Similarly, Namibia is committed to ensure that all former Namibian refugees hosted in Botswana are voluntarily repatriated to Namibia. In this regard Namibia is proud to announce that this voluntary repatriation has

commenced and we commend the Government of Botswana as the host country for their support and cooperation.

Madam Chairperson,

Namibia has undertaken to finalize the local integration of Six Hundred and Sixty-Four (664) remaining Former Angolan Refugees before the end of 2018.

Madam Chairperson,

Statelessness increases risk factors for refugees and IDPs that could influence the likelihood to fall prey to human traffickers, especially for women ^{and children}. We are concerned that more and more human trafficking for the purposes of organ harvesting come to light. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address and prevent statelessness, a situation that has persisted for decades. Accordingly, Namibia remains committed to fully implement the Global 2014 – 2024 Action Plan to End Statelessness.

During the month of August, Namibia and UNHCR have conducted a verification exercise through the Population and Registration Identity Management Ecosystem (PRIMES). The PRIMES encompasses the Biometric Identify Management System (BIMS). The exercise has produced reliable statistical information for planning purposes. In this regards we highly commend UNHCR for their sterling work.

Madam Chairperson,

Namibia welcomes that UNHCR prioritizes Africa and the Middle East when it comes to addressing the refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs)'s needs. In this regard, we wish to work closely with UNHCR and Member States' whose nationals are hosted in Namibia for a lasting solution to compliment the High Commissioner's plans towards durable solutions for asylum seekers and refugees.

Madam Chairperson,

Namibia reiterates the call for the full implementation of the New York Declaration, which will ensure the operationalisation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), and wishes to congratulate the High Commissioner on the bold steps taken in order to fight Gender Based Violence (GBV) perpetrated against vulnerable asylum seekers, refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

Madam Chairperson, in conclusion I like to reiterate Namibia's recognition of the outstanding work of the High Commissioner and his team.

I thank you.